



SUPPORT AND MONITORING OF THE PACE PILOT

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SOME NUMBERS

Number of Countries: 3

Number of Schools: 11

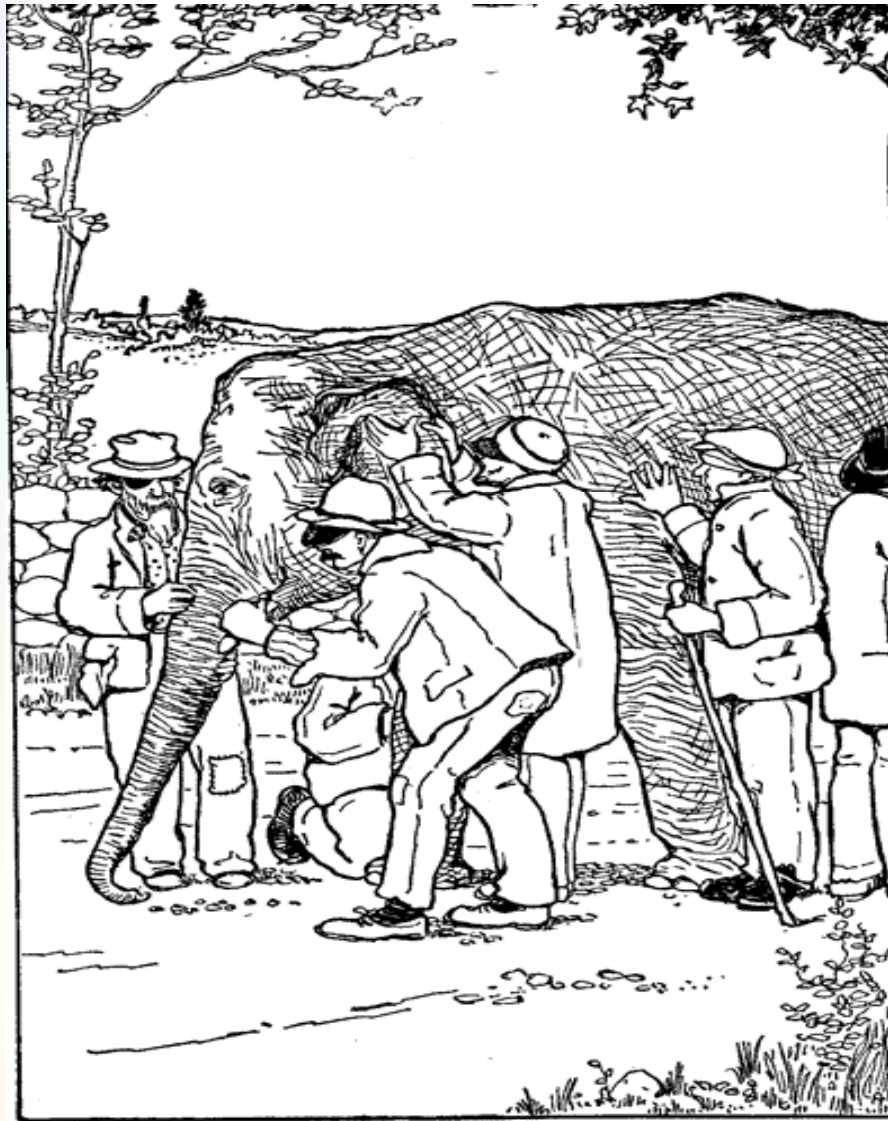
Number of Different kinds of Schools : 8 (Vocational , Scientific, Artistic, Technical Commercial, Business and Language, and Electrotechnical Schools, Gymnasia and United World Colleges)

Number of Teachers: 24

Number of Subjects: 11(economics, history, English language, philosophy, chemistry, physics, biology, environmental systems, Croatian language and literature, Italian language and literature, humanities, and world arts and cultures.)

Number of Students: 730 + 39 still to come

PERSPECTIVES ON THE PILOT



THE TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVE

I. THE POSITIVE POINTS

1. Experiential Learning

- Students reach the conclusions rather than being told.
- “Students love to see how things work”.
- A bit childish? Once students realised how these methods could be used to analyse serious issues, they understood their potential and grew to like them.
- Students are getting better results using this method than they were getting before using traditional methods.

I. THE POSITIVE POINTS

2. Participation/Collaboration

- Students asked questions, expressed their opinions and their preconceptions were challenged.
- Students enjoy being asked what they think and what they want to do. “They say no other teacher does this”.
- The teachers’ views were sometimes altered, or their knowledge extended, as a result of student presentations/research.
- Debate pushed students to think critically, to use knowledge in the cut and thrust of argument

I. THE POSITIVE POINTS

3. Relationships with Students/ the Personal Development of the Student

- Student talents and different kinds of intelligence found expression in diverse ways through PACE strategies
- Teachers know students much better than before. The strategies have enabled teachers to see how students think and become aware of their different talents, skills and personal histories. These insights increase respect for the students and also enable teachers to prepare lessons in the light of the students' interests.
- Students are challenged to think about what they are doing as opposed to the routine of learning and testing some are used to. Inherent in such approaches is a different relationship between the teacher and the students

I. THE POSITIVE POINTS

4. Fostering Independence

- In spite of the difficulty of the subject material, understanding was aided by individual work.
- The pilot has convinced sceptical teachers of the value of independent work.
- The students decide what they will do in group work---who will undertake specific tasks--- and therefore develop individual responsibility.
- Research work has stimulated exchange of views and has promoted learning at all levels in the class, above all in the most able students, without excluding the others.

I. THE POSITIVE POINTS

5. Real Life Applications

- Students enjoy discussion with links to real life ---“Students need that”.
- Local real life examples of theory were thought provoking, raised awareness of local issues and pushed students to think deeply, entailing a grasp of complexity and of serious issues. From local issues it is possible to move to examples from the wider world.
- Human rights can be discussed in relation to local issues. Delicate issues can be discussed at an academic level rather than at the street level.

I. THE POSITIVE POINTS

6. Professional Development

- This kind of project wakes teachers up and reminds them to change what they are doing in the classroom. It gives an opportunity for enthusiasm to be renewed.
- Teachers' abilities and competencies have grown through PACE methods that have stimulated reflection on new ideas circulating in recent years.
- “By teaching in this way you always try to improve as a teacher. With traditional methods and curriculum structures (in BiH) you cannot improve much.....you get stuck” in the cycle and “repetition leads to boredom and frustration”.
- Choosing topics gives teachers freedom and time to “do it their own way”, using imagination. “If it’s interesting for teachers, it must be interesting for students!”
- The pilot has facilitated collaboration with other school colleagues.

I. THE POSITIVE POINTS

7. Content

- Students liked the idea of studying one topic over some weeks (not too long, however !) in preference to a quick succession of topics.

I. THE POSITIVE POINTS

8. Work Load

- Once the exemplar has been prepared, there is less work for the teacher.

II. CHALLENGES FACED BY TEACHERS

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1. Problem of excessive content

- In some school systems there is pressure to cover extensive content in limited time e.g. 50 topics in 70 lessons in a year (This was a recurrent theme).

II. CHALLENGES FACED BY TEACHERS

2. Time Pressures

- Many classes had only two 45 minute lessons per week, making it difficult to develop topics over several lessons
- Little time for students to do independent learning.
- Experiential learning can take more time than traditional methods
- Using the PACE approaches is more work for teachers. Preparation takes longer.

II. CHALLENGES FACED BY TEACHERS

3. Problems of Adaptation

- Students find it difficult to switch to PACE learning techniques if they are in a school system that reinforces passive learning. They don't necessarily understand why the PACE teacher is using new techniques.
- Some students are not used to doing follow-up work independently on their own initiative.
- It's sometimes difficult to get students working productively in groups.
- This way of teaching is challenging for students. Some students don't want to be independent, responsible or emancipated because being controlled is more secure.

II. CHALLENGES FACED BY TEACHERS

4. Lack of Money

- Can preclude work outside the classroom

II. CHALLENGES FACED BY TEACHERS

5. The Future of PACE

- If PACE teachers continue to use the PACE strategies it is not certain that colleagues will be won over. Some are resistant to new ideas.
- Teaching the pilot in a national programme is possible but requires teacher initiative. Using traditional methods is often easier for the students, especially in content-based subjects. The highly prescriptive curriculum, text books stipulated by the government and test dates set in advance by the authorities, present challenges for the PACE teacher.

THE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE

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1. Experiential Learning

- Practical work is a more interesting way of learning
- Learning through practical work was very important and new to many students.
- A better understanding was achieved through this method of learning.
- “You can learn better by seeing and doing”.
- Liked the combination of theory and practical

THE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE

2. Participation/Collaboration (A)

- More interesting collaborating with the teacher in preference to dictation and teacher centred lessons. Felt part of a team, as protagonists in the learning process.
- Became more confident about expressing their ideas; did not have to reflect set opinions; there was space for their questions.
- Discovered the importance of dialogue and listening in gaining new perspectives.

THE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE

2. Participation/Collaboration (B – Group Work)

- Students helped each other, and formed better relationships
- Shy people were brought out and everyone became aware that they have something to offer
- Students were supported by each other's strengths. They learned from each other (eg power point skills) and achieved more than they could have done individually. This equipped them for independent individual work.
- Group work led students to think more critically because of constant challenges by other students. They felt they were influenced to be more objective, that their critical thinking skills were sharpened and that overall they were pushed to think more deeply.

THE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE

3. Relationship with the Teacher

- Had more attention from, and a better (interactive) relationship with, the teacher; the teacher helped them; they are treated as individuals, as adults; they feel they matter to the teacher.
- Both the students and the teacher behaved differently (in a positive sense)
- Students see the teacher as open minded and welcoming of student ideas. “Teachers help students fulfil their ideas”. Ideas can be discussed with the teacher and teachers can be “corrected”.
- Relationship with the teacher was one of mutual respect and support

THE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE

4. Independent/Active Learning

- Students learned how to deal with a range of resources of varying degrees of usefulness; how to select useful material; how to distinguish between fact and opinion.
- They learned how to synthesise material gleaned from their own research (as distinct from retrieving relevant information from a set chapter or text book.)
- Using more than one-text book enables students to see the relative merits of each and gives more than one perspective
- Students were encouraged to use resources in a critical way and felt encouraged to think rather than regurgitate. They got beyond facts and figures.
- Required to do more than memorise facts. Had to filter information rather than absorb it;
- Students feel more motivated and are learning to work for themselves not just for marks.
- Research for essays and presentations gives scope for the development of personal views.
- Students feel more responsible and study for and by themselves

THE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE

5. Real Life Applications

- Learning was very related to the outside world. “ For the next two years it’s going to be completely different how I see things, how I perceive things---that’s opened up doors for me.”
- Students enjoyed having to look at economic issues from the perspective of regions other than their own.
- Students see the interconnectedness of the world and see patterns emerging.
- The knowledge and understanding attained helped students understand the modern world. They can now understand newspaper articles!

THE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE

6. Diverse Methods

- Diverse methods enable each person to find something that suits him
- Lessons were different from other lessons in the school
- Diversity of approaches was new. Students perceived this as being “less stressful” than the routine of input, learn and test;
- Exploring different perspectives led to changing preconceived ideas about duty. “The whole way I see duty has changed”. Felt they had become more open-minded;

An Individual Student's Viewpoint

I liked this way of work. It holds something unique and special that connects a student with a teacher. It was great because we worked in groups; everyone expressed their own opinion without any criticism and quarrel. We worked a lot, but the teacher was excellent, she turned all that work into fun, which we all enjoyed. It was interesting: we drew, painted, cut and also learned a lot. This way of work helped bringing the teacher and students together. The teacher can find out student's attitudes, wishes and possibilities and because of that he or she can teach them what is the most important in life. During the preparation of role plays for courtroom, the teacher helped us choose the costumes and characters and, what is the most important, she taught us that most of people don't respect human rights. She also explained that too many women suffer today because of physical and psychical mistreat. She told us what to do in that situation. I am completely satisfied with this way of work. I like it. The discussion put us into position of adults. We always judge them and now we can understand them better and easier. We learned that we must think before we judge somebody. I think that we should frequently work in this way because we express ourselves easier and we have less stage fright of talking in public. We put ourselves in position of something we could work and we realize our possibilities. **If all teachers changed their way of work like our teacher Kristina, many students would be interested in their subject.**

(Bold added by me)

THE HEADS' PERSPECTIVE

- Many Heads wish for educational reform and see the PACE pilot as a step in the right direction.
- Many Heads are looking for continuity as opposed to projects that come and go. Such Heads would be happy if the PACE project became “an engine of radical modification of the professional practices of teachers”.

THE MONITORS' PERSPECTIVE

- All teachers piloted their exemplar materials in relation to Big Ideas, Core Beliefs and Common Strategies.
- Teachers showed far more commitment, flair and imagination than was required for the fulfilment of the basic terms of the project.
- The experience of PACE pilot classes in schools strengthened our sense of the need for this kind of educational reform and made it clear that such reform is possible, if not always easy to accomplish, within existing curricula.

An Outsider's Perspective on the PACE Pilot

“ An impressive undertaking.”

Professor Howard Gardner,
Hobbs Professor of Cognition and Education,
Harvard Graduate School of Education